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INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY 0272
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY 0538
RUEHAN/AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO PRIORITY 0001
RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA PRIORITY 0029
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY 0059
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI PRIORITY 0050
RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT PRIORITY 0037
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY 0026
RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA PRIORITY 0045
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY
RUEHNO/USDELMC BRUSSELS BE PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USNATO 000350

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL EWWT PHSA NATO MOPS MCAP SO XA

SUBJECT: COUNTER-PIRACY: WORKING WITH SOMALI OFFICIALS;
LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

REF: USNATO 346 (NOTAL)

Classified By: A/Political Advisor A. "Hoot" Baez. Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C/REL NATO) As reported reftel, NATO has approved the Operational Plan for a long-term counter-piracy mission, Operation Ocean Shield, to include supporting and contributing to regional capacity building with regional authorities connected with the deterrence and prevention of piracy. While Operation Ocean Shield is standing up, the NATO mission it will replace, Operation Allied Protector, has already begun laying the groundwork for its success. According to the website of the Allied Maritime Component Command Headquarters Northwood (MCC Northwood), regional government and law enforcement representatives from Somalia visited the NATO flagship HMS Cornwall on August 13 off the port of Boosaaso. The NATO Task Force Commander said the purpose of the meeting was "to work out how our efforts can best be combined to deter piracy and disrupt any attacks before they take place." He added that "although they operate from shore and we at sea, there is a shared goal; that is stopping piracy and the damage that it brings not only to international shipping but also to Somalia as a whole." Meetings such as this will help prepare the way for NATO capacity building efforts in the region.

¶2. (U) The text of the MCC Northwood website article is reproduced below:

BEGIN TEXT

14 Aug 09

NATO works with Somali Officials

Regional government and law enforcement representatives from Somalia visited the NATO flagship HMS CORNWALL yesterday off the port of Boosaaso. The delegation, headed by the Minister of Ports and Marine Transport, Mr. Abdil Irazaq Gaaiyite met

the NATO Task Force Commander, Commodore Steve Chick CBE Royal Navy. The meeting was the first direct engagement between the Boosaaso authorities and the NATO Task Force since its arrival in the region on 29 Jun 09.

The purpose of the visit was to establish a working relationship between NATO, the Government, Bari regional authorities and local law enforcement agencies. Following briefs by both parties much common ground and opportunity to co-operate further was identified.

The Task Force Commander, Commodore Steve Chick Royal Navy said: "I welcome the opportunity to work with the Minister and his colleagues from Boosaaso and the Bari Region. The purpose of today's meeting is to work out how our efforts can best be combined to deter piracy and disrupt any attacks before they take place. Although they operate from shore and we at sea, there is a shared goal; that is stopping piracy and the damage that it brings not only to international shipping but also to Somalia as a whole. There is much common ground and we must use this opportunity to align our efforts as best we can to bring maximum pressure on the pirates and those that support them."

One area of co-operation that can be quickly implemented is the exchange of information between the counter piracy forces ashore and those at sea.

Whilst NATO and other international forces are able to deter and disrupt pirate attacks far out at sea, real success will

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only be achieved if the pirates can be stopped before they depart from the beaches in the first place. That is where the potential for frequent and rapid exchanges of information between NATO and the shore authorities will be key. Early information about pirate movements from the coast will better enable warships to intercept them prior to them reaching their victims, often in the international shipping lanes. Reciprocal information from NATO warships can be of great value in enabling pirates to be captured by shore authorities as they return from their attempts at piracy.

The Commodore continued: "NATO and other warships will provide regular information about pirate activities at sea, beyond the range of the Coast Guard and law enforcement agencies. In return they can provide us with the details of suspicious activity that happens inshore. Together we will build up a better picture and can react more quickly to incidents."

During the meeting, Abdiwahid Mohamed Hersi, Director General of Fisheries, Ports and Marine Resources, explained the damage that piracy was inflicting on the country as a whole. The spread of crime inland, the soaring cost of commodities, and the damage to traditional Somali society all have their roots in piracy.

It is as a result of these issues and the need to secure the safety of shipping in the Gulf of Aden that NATO has deployed one of its 2 Standing Maritime Groups to the region. The original mission "Operation Allied Protector" commenced in Mar 09 in support of UN Security Council Resolutions was focused on deterrence and disruption of pirate attacks. The overall aim was to safeguard navigation in the sea lanes adjacent to Somalia. The opportunity was not missed to help protect vessels engaged with the World Food Programme, delivering vital humanitarian aid to the needy ashore. With the increase of piracy and threat to the strategically important sea lanes NATO is now looking to the future and seeking to work with local law enforcement agencies to build up regional capacity.

Commodore Chick said: "This is an essential mission that not only provides security to shipping but also helps reduce the damage that piracy is inflicting on the people of Somalia.

NATO's efforts fully support the UN Security Council resolutions and demonstrate the flexibility and capability of the Alliance in dealing with security challenges around the world."

END TEXT

¶3. (U) Additional news about NATO counterpiracy efforts can be found at the MCC Northwood website: www.manw.nato.int.
DAALDER